

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 SAB-01 AID-20 DRC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1096

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 0092

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - P A R A 2 A N D 3

GENEVA FOR STERNER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IS

SUBJ: ISRAELI ELECTION

REF: TEL AVIV 0042

1. AS REPORTED IN ALL NEWSPAPERS JANUARY 7, ALLOCATION OF KNESSET SEATS BASED ON FINAL COUNT OF VOTES, INCLUDING MILITARY, GIVES LABOR ALIGNMENT 51 SEATS, LIKUD 39, NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY (NRP) 10, AGUDAT ISRAEL AND POALEI AGUDAT ISRAEL 5, INDEPENDENT LABERAL PARTY (ILP) 4, RAKAH 4, CITIZENS RIGHTS 3, ALIGNMENT AFFILIATED ARAB LISTS 3, AND MOKED 1. OFFICIAL RESULTS TO BE ANNOUNCED JANUARY 8 BY KNESSET'S CENTRAL ELECTION COMMITTEE.

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2. COUNTING OF MILITARY VOTES RESULTED IN ADDITIONAL SEAT EACH FOR

LIKUD AND CITIZENS RIGHTS LIST OVER EARLIER ALLOCATION PROJECTED ON BASIS OF CIVILIAN VOTES ONLY, AND LOSS OF ONE SEAT BY NRP.

3. PERIOD OF INTENSE MANEUVERING ON FORMATION OF NEXT GOVERNMENT COALITION IS JUST GETTING UNDERWAY AND IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE FOR AT LEAST SEVERAL WEEKS. LABOR ALIGNMENT PREFERENCE CLEARLY IS FOR RECONSTITUTION OF OUTGOING COALITION, ALTHOUGH REPORTS AROUND RE "DEALS" WHICH COULD EXCLUDE NRP. INDEPENDENT LIBERALS AND MAPAM PARTY WITHIN LABOR ALIGNMENT HAVE EXPLICITLY REFUSED TO JOIN COALITION WHICH WOULD INCLUDE OPPOSITION LIKUD. NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY ON OTHER HAND CONTINUES TO PRESS FOR NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT INCLUDING LIKUD.

4. VARIOUS ARRANGEMENTS COULD ENABLE FORMATION OF LABOR ALIGNMENT-LED GOVERNMENT, BUT IT IS AT PRESENT TOO SOON TO TRY TO FORECAST EXACT FORM OF NEW COALITION. WHILE BARE ONE-VOTE MAJORITY POSSIBLE WITH COALITION OF LABOR ALIGNMENT, ILP-CITIZENS RIGHTS PARLIMENTARY BLOC, AND ARAB LISTS, LABOR ALIGNMENT MOST LIKELY WILL SEEK INCLUSION OF ONE OR ANOTHER OF RELIGIOUS PARTIES.

5. DESPITE HARDLINE OPENING POSITIONS OF NRP ON NEED FOR NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT AND ON JORDAN WEST BANK AND OPENING FEINTS BY BOTH SIDES, WE EXPECT THAT LABOR ALIGNMENT AND NRP WILL ENGAGE IN SERIOUS NEGOTIATION EFFORT TO BRIDGE THEIR DIFFERENCES SUFFICIENTLY TO ALLOW NEW COALITION AGREEMENT. INsofar AS AGREEMENT PROBABLY CAN BE REACHED ON MORE IMMEDIATE ISSUES OF DIS-ENGAGEMENT OF FORCES AND PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT, LABOR ALIGNMENT AND NRP COULD REACH UNDERSTANDING TO FUZZ OR DEFER HARDER QUESTIONS OF WEST BANK AND PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN. NRP INTEREST IN RETAINING ITS MINISTRIES, AND PATRONAGE WHICH IT CAN THEREBY DISPENSE, MAY FURNISH ADDITIONAL INCENTIVE FOR REACHING AGREEMENT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, COALITION GOVERNMENT, POLITICAL PARTIES, LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TELAV00092
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740158/aaaaccmz.tel
Line Count: 94
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: TEL AVIV 0042
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 JUN 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <19 DEC 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ISRAELI ELECTION
TAGS: PINT, IS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005